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life, or in his works, we shall be constantly struck with the peculiar and strongly marked character of both, and be prepared to acknowledge that, if the "mind of man be indeed the proper study of mankind," few volumes contain a richer store of varied wisdom, than the life and the writings of Machiavelli.

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ART. V. — *Life and Character of William Roscoe.*

*The Life of William Roscoe.* By his SON, HENRY ROSCOE. Boston. 1834.

THE most instructive chapter in the comprehensive records of philosophy, is example. There its principles are illustrated in action; its spirit typified in life. By this agency has the divine Being most perfectly revealed himself: and by it, in the moral economy of his universe, are the virtuous energies of humanity continually renewed. The happiest inspiration of which society is the source, is the influence diffused through it, in various attractive forms, by its most distinguished members. Coleridge has beautifully, and, with his accustomed significance, remarked, that "it is only by celestial observations that even terrestrial charts can be constructed scientifically." To gaze steadfastly at the intellectual and moral lights of the world, is at once the criterion and pledge of our own advancement; and in that constellation there are for all of us, some bright, particular stars, which, on account of their proximity to the region of our peculiar circumstances and sympathies, should be most earnestly and studiously regarded. The work now before us is peculiarly interesting in this country, as it furnishes the example of one who lived and died the active denizen of a commercial community like our own; of one whose native endowments were by no means brilliant, and whose circumstances, as far as they were prosperous, were created by himself; of one who, thus situated, nobly won and modestly wore the wreath of literary honor, the credit of self-denying probity, the name of a philanthropist; and who accomplished this by the simple but sublime energy of his character, by the "power of virtue in the human soul."

If any extrinsic circumstances could augment the satisfaction with which we shall review the life and comment upon the character before us, they may be found in the fact that we are indebted for our sources of information to the son of him we contemplate. The volumes mentioned at the head of this article, are an offering of filial respect and gratitude. And notwithstanding the delicacy of the duty, it has been most happily performed.

William Roscoe was born about the middle of the last century, at Mount Pleasant, in, or near the town of Liverpool. His parentage was humble, and his early years blessed with maternal fidelity, but unmarked by any indications of intellectual precocity, and not favored by influences superior to his condition. His own memory could suggest but one or two characteristics of his infant days, and the most prominent of these were a deep and instinctive dislike to restraint, and a fondness for solitary rambling along the river of his native town. At the age of twelve years the discipline of a common school education was exchanged for a course of life involving a degree of physical effort, and an opportunity for communion with nature, the genial effects of which, upon so susceptible a being, were such as circumstances of more apparent advantage might have failed in producing. Young Roscoe was called to assist his father in the business of agriculture and the sale of its products; the intervals of leisure which occurred during these employments, were devoted to reading. Doubtless, the three years passed in this manner, at an age when both body and mind are so liable to receive permanent impressions from slight causes, were very influential in giving solidity to his constitution, and in fitting his intellect and feelings for that maturity of action which so happily followed. "This mode of life," says he, in a letter to a friend, "gave health and vigor to my body, and amusement and instruction to my mind; and to this day, I well remember the delicious sleep which succeeded my labors and from which I was again called at an early hour. If I were now asked whom I considered to be happiest of the human race, I should answer those who cultivate the earth by their own hands."

At fifteen, when called upon to adopt a profession, that of a bookseller was at first chosen, and even entered upon; but in a very brief period, attendance upon the shop proved wear-

some, and in the end he was articled for six years to an attorney. The duties of his clerkship were frequently arduous, or at least engrossing, and they possessed continually increasing claims in his view, as upon his future success in the pursuit he had chosen, his family mainly depended for support. Yet from these labors he would ever and anon turn to those less practical, but more attractive subjects of attention, which cheered the sterile and often irksome walks of duty, and turned the springs of thought to finer issues. Shenstone became successively his beloved companion and admired model, till the author of the *Deserted Village* shared the empire of his young but fervent literary love. A few but choice intimacies were formed; these gradually ripened into friendships which seem to have been singularly productive of mutual good. Under their benign incitement and cheering companionship, Roscoe studied the ancient languages, and was induced by the counsel and aid of one peculiarly gifted and proportionally beloved, to devote that attention to the Italian language and literature which, in after life, was the foundation of his literary success. At this time commenced his habitual cultivation of poetry, in which he acquired a facility and taste that neutralized the effect of severer studies, and imparted a cheerful and elevated excitement to his whole pilgrimage on earth. Yet with all these expanding and improving tastes the direct business of his youthful years received his first and most faithful care. "It is true," he remarks, "the amusements of poetry, and the incense of praise constitute of themselves some degree of happiness, and, it may be said, happiness should never be slighted. But, alas! I am a traveller, and before I intend to indulge myself, I propose to get to the end of my journey. If every beautiful prospect and every shepherd's pipe must allure me out of my road, what probability is there that I shall ever find myself at rest?"

His poetical compositions, written before the age of manhood, indicate the benevolent enterprizes toward which the ardent energies of opening life tended, and to which so fair a portion of its noon and evening were devoted, — the abolition of the African Slave Trade, and the intellectual elevation of his countrymen. The first he promoted in common with many spirits of inferior philanthropy, but in relation to the second, he evinced, even in the morning of life, a deep and discerning benevolence. Then, as ever after, he recognized

the necessity of an element that should modify the influences of the commercial world, and cherish the latent sentiment of human nature among the bustling members of a mercantile community. That he was well aware of the requisiteness of an agent more effectual than mere taste in the process of improving society, that he owed his moral growth and the power and purity of his mental efforts to a deeper principle, is not alone evidenced by the general tone of his life and recorded views. At this time he was the author of an able and forcible tract upon religious duty, the sentiments of which were directly deduced from the teachings of Christianity.

During the year 1774, Mr. Roscoe commenced practice, being admitted to the King's bench. His assiduity and conscientious spirit in the early, and therefore, most anxious stage of his professional course, is most interestingly evinced in his correspondence with Miss Jane Griffies, whose destiny it was to become the companion, and minister to the happiness of a life, which derived its deepest and most constant satisfaction from domestic influences. These letters (which, it may be observed, passed between the parties while residing in the same town,—with the few exceptions, occasioned by the temporary absence of the latter,) breathe a most confiding affection; but it is an affection dignified with a religious and intellectual sentiment, that deepened, while it embalmed it; it was a love evidenced chiefly by an earnest interest in the legitimate good of its object,—a love based on similarity of taste and sympathy of purpose; a love which inspired only to improve. “I cannot help pleasing myself (says Mr. R. in one of the first of his epistles,) with the reflection, what an infinite variety of subjects this intercourse will give rise to. Convinced of the perfect confidence that exists between us, how freely might our thoughts expand themselves! The desire of pleasing might cause some little attention to the mode of expression, whilst the certainty of mutual indulgence would prevent us from being apprehensive about trivial inaccuracies.”

The first incident which broke in upon the quiet routine of his life, after his marriage, was a professional visit to London. On this occasion, he experienced, in no small degree, a trial which seems the nearest conceivable approach to the situation of Tantalus,—that of being surrounded with the luxuries of literature and art, with the quiet impulse of taste, whetted

into a keen appetite by their alluring presence, while the want of means condemns it to remain unsatisfied. The additions to his library and collection of prints, were made, therefore, very gradually, and the extreme conscientiousness with which he indulged so innocent a taste, must have greatly enhanced their value.

The introduction of some original sketches into the exhibition of a Society of Art in Liverpool, in 1784, indicates his increasing interest in its practice ; but this is still more strongly manifested by the sedulous application of his literary powers to its promotion. During the next year he delivered a course of lectures on the subject, and by means of a poem on the Origin of Engraving, and several valuable contributions of a more fugitive character, labored to propagate correct notions of the principles of art, and excite an interest in its elevating pursuits. But, perhaps, his feelings and efforts in regard to these objects, are most happily associated with that ready appreciation of the works of art, in all their variety, and that earnest sympathy with and friendship for professed artists, which is so beautiful a feature of his life and character.

Three years after, however, his philanthropic spirit was engaged in an enterprize involving results of a more momentous nature, and demanding no small measure of perseverance and moral courage. Its success involved the utter annihilation of one of the most lucrative branches of the commerce of Liverpool ; and those pledged to its advancement, were forced, to a greater or less extent, to come forth from the retirement of private life, become identified with a party, and engage in a contest calculated to excite strong feelings of personal and political animosity. These circumstances were so diametrically opposed to the temper and taste of Mr. Roscoe, that had it been a cause of less moral importance, he might have been excused for transferring the responsibility of its defence to others. But intimately allied as was the issue with the cause of humanity, the triumph of Christianity, and the character of his native land, it appealed to the highest principles of his nature ; and with him such an appeal was never in vain. In the course of this year, therefore, appeared a poem entitled the Wrongs of Africa, — a pamphlet demonstrating the injustice and impolicy of a traffic in her children ; and, soon after, a most masterly reply to a specious attempt to prove its lawfulness on the authority of Scripture. By these

and similar writings, by personal intercourse and correspondence with Wilberforce, and other enlightened friends of this great cause, and especially by creating a just public sentiment in one of the strong holds of the trade, Mr. Roscoe contributed largely to the happy result with which the enterprize was eventually crowned.

It cannot be supposed that the progress of an event which riveted the attention and divided the opinions of the civilized world, failed to attract the anxious attention, and elicit the thoughts and feelings of Roscoe. Accordingly, we find him at the opening of the French Revolution, acting under the influence of that love of man, and that faith in the ultimate supremacy of his higher nature, whence only springs an enlightened attachment to the principles of freedom. Of all the occasional products of his muse, none have been more popular or excellent in their kind, than those induced by the first brilliant stage of this event. Of his intelligent sympathy and conduct, at this period, his correspondence and public course furnish the most honorable testimony. In his case, as in that of many others, it was the primary means of drawing into political life and effort talents and sympathies, which, but for so exciting an occasion, would have been devoted exclusively to the more retired interests of literature. But it was not his case, like that of many of his contemporaries, when the dark era of the Revolution came on, to lose his faith in the blessedness of genuine political freedom. He discriminated between the effects of a long-sustained state of moral degradation upon the people, and the legitimate spirit of genuine political independence. Both he believed subject to the eternal laws of truth, and therefore deemed it as unphilosophical as sinful, to refer the recklessness and atrocity of a debased populace, to the pure and generous impulse of true liberty.

Attention to the language of Italy, to which Mr. Roscoe's mind was, as before stated, early directed, soon introduced him to an acquaintance with her standard authors. The study of these, during the whole period we have cursorily reviewed, formed one of the principal sources of his literary recreation. In perusing the historians, particularly Machiavelli and Ammirato, who wrote the Florentine annals, his primitive interest in the character of Lorenzo de' Medici was strengthened, and his long, though silently cherished purpose of writing his life, confirmed. The utility of such a work, if success-

fully executed, none could better understand than himself; yet, even he did not apparently anticipate the numerous indirect benefits of which it was productive. The numerous historical events and interesting circumstances, collateral with the main subject, the attractive form in which the literature and associations of Italy were brought into view, in the course of the work, and the important epoch in the world's history embraced in the period to which it referred, all tended to enhance its practical worth, and the gratification to be derived from its perusal.

The chief difficulty in the way of his design, was the want of adequate materials. Happily, this was removed, by the aid of a friend in Italy, who undertook to forward him the necessary transcripts from original documents, and such works as were not attainable in England, while the sale of two extensive libraries furnished him with yet other resources. Thus furnished, and with the sympathy of many individuals of high literary character, as well as that of his numerous personal friends enlisted in the enterprize, he commenced and assiduously prosecuted it at intervals of leisure.

Upon the publication of the work, in 1796, its success, in every respect, was complete. For the full evidence of this, we must again refer to the correspondence of the author, introduced so largely into the history of his life. Seldom do labors of this nature meet with such a degree of contemporary appreciation, or elicit more sincere and universal testimony to their worth. If ever an author had reason to feel satisfied with the result of his efforts, as regards their immediate reception by the literary public, that one was Roscoe. If he did not altogether escape the critical acumen of the times, he lived to improve by its just strictures, and to lose the memory of its unjust severity, in the various and noble tributes of praise and gratitude which were poured in upon him. He lived to see his own portrait of his favorite translated into the several modern languages of Europe, to amend and pass it through the press to a perfect edition, and to behold it, like a radiant message, bearing his name through many lands, and awakening attention to those sources of intellectual pleasure, of which he had drank so deeply, and whose renovating waters he would fain see a common well-spring on the dusty highway of life. From the individual encomiums passed upon Mr. Roscoe, on this occasion, it is difficult to select one, all being, either



from their origin or character, peculiarly pleasing. We cannot but notice, however, the allusion to the subject by the author of the Pursuits of Literature, as being from a political opponent, and, consequently, induced solely by a sense of the intrinsic excellence of the work.

“But hark! what solemn strains from Arno’s vales  
 Breathe rapture, wafted on the Tuscan gales!  
 Lorenzo rears again his awful head,  
 And feels his ancient glories round him spread;  
 The Muses, starting from their trance, revive,  
 And at their Roscoe’s bidding, wake and live.”

From what has now been said, it is evident that the mere business of his profession had for Mr. Roscoe few attractions. He was engaged, too, in company with another gentleman, in a project which, soon after the publication of his work, began to assume a promising aspect; this was the draining and cultivating an extensive tract of peat-moss in the neighborhood of Manchester. Looking, in a good measure, to this source of income, for support, and with a view of gradually bringing his affairs to a close, and retiring to the more complete enjoyment of his taste, in the course of the year 1796, he relinquished his profession. How singly and sincerely he regarded professional occupation as a means subordinate to a great end, may be inferred from his reply to a friend who rallied him upon his withdrawing from its responsibilities. There is something peculiarly like a home-thrust in its applicability to ourselves. “Surely man is the most foolish of all animals, and civilized man the most foolish of all men. Anticipation is his curse; and to prevent the contingency of evil, he makes life one continual evil. Health, wisdom, peace of mind, conscience, all are sacrificed to the absurd purpose of heaping up for the use of life more than life can employ, under the flimsy pretext of providing for his children, till practice becomes habit, and we labor on till we are obliged to take our departure, as tired of this world as we are unprepared for the rational happiness of the next.”

He now resumed his Italian reading and this with the study of Botany, his favorite science, a translation of the *Balia*, of Luigi Tansillo, his agency in instituting the admirable Athenæum of Liverpool, and the issuing of a new edition of Lorenzo, with other labors of a desultory nature,

occupied his time and attention, until the spring of 1799. And then it was, in pursuance of that design of retirement so congenial to his nature, and so promising of intellectual fruits, that he became the possessor of Allerton Hall in the vicinity of Liverpool. There he at once renewed his literary labors, in the field where his recent laurels were won. In preparing the history of Leo X. he but still further developed, under additional advantages, the subject so happily begun in the life of Lorenzo.

Scarcely a year had elapsed, when the claims of friendship called him from his elegant retreat into a scene of action more truly business-like, in its nature, than the one whence he had lately retired. The family of that friend whose exertions abroad had so signally aided Mr. Roscoe in obtaining interesting and necessary historical documents, had asked his counsel and personal assistance in re-arranging the affairs of their extensive banking establishment. Circumstances and his sense of duty, in the end, devolved the conduct of this concern chiefly upon himself, and, in a great measure, identified his pecuniary interests with its success. The next social and benevolent enterprise in which he seems to have engaged was the establishment of a botanical garden near town. And his pen at this time was extensively devoted to the advancement of this science, in testimony of which several interesting instances occur in his letters and communications to Botanical Societies.

The influence of Mr. Roscoe in the private circles, and, indeed, through the whole range of society around him, frequently afforded him opportunities of most happily directing the public mind, and rendered his political opinions well known. This was a prominent cause of his activity during the excitement in relation to the movements on the other side of the channel, to which we have briefly alluded, and contributed, at the approach of an important political crisis in his own country, to direct towards him the expectant regards of his townsmen. In 1806 he was returned, by the freemen of Liverpool, as a representative in parliament, and, in accordance with the sense of public duty which characterized his life, he obeyed the call, and carried into the halls of legislation the highmindedness, perseverance and loyalty to principle which had secured him the suffrages of his constituents. Here he enjoyed the high satisfaction of urging, with all the power that

argument, appeal, and personal influence afforded, the passage of the bill for Catholic Emancipation and the Abolition of the Slave Trade. The plan of a Reform in Parliament, the principles of which he subsequently most ably defended, was a measure, the happy fulfilment of which he lived to witness. During the next two years, though not officially engaged, he was much occupied in political writing, particularly in recommending peace with France.

Soon after his retirement from public life, he appears, from additions and improvements made upon his estate for the better accommodation of his library and collections, as well as from the literary projects he then conceived, to have meditated a yet more complete devotion to intellectual labor. The most important of his plans were a life of Erasmus and several translations from the Italian, of high interest. Subsequent circumstances induced him to relinquish these designs. He, however, derived much pleasure, at this time, from collating and arranging several additional illustrations of his biographies, and especially from a visit at Holkham devoted to researches among a highly valuable collection of manuscripts and rare works, belonging to his friend Mr. Coke, who assigned to him the pleasing task of rescuing them from the disorder into which they were plunged, and reproducing their distinctive characters.

But that universal principle, vicissitude, was about to bring upon Mr. Roscoe a series of discipline whereby his moral strength was destined to be severely tested. The banking concern with which he was so intimately connected, — owing to the demands of the times and the scarcity of specie, produced by the opening of the American Trade, — was forced to suspend payment. Mr. Roscoe's honorable feelings obliged him to assume the entire care of the interest of his creditors. By a well-devised plan and temporary compromise, he was confident of being able to discharge all the debts in the space of six years and still sustain the establishment. Many untoward circumstances, — particularly an unfortunate investment of a large part of their funds, rendered the prospect, at the termination of this long and anxious season of uncongenial toil, — increasingly gloomy. In view of such a state of things, he determined upon a sacrifice that can be duly estimated only by him who understands that fellow-feeling for the master minds of our race and the forms in which they have become familiar,

which springs up and grows strong in the bosom where it is habitually cherished ; — by him who knows, in its full measure, the happiness of collecting about him the gems of literature and art, connecting them with associations of feeling and circumstance, gazing upon them as upon the faces of friends, and into them as into the oracles of truth ; — by him, in a word, the idea of whose usefulness, honor and daily enjoyment is associated indissolubly, in his own mind, with books, and products of art, — not in their general aspect, — but as they have been gathered by the slow accumulation of careful expenditure, and become endeared by years of blessed and ministering companionship, in his own cheerful study. Who will deny to Mr. Roscoe, in the sacrifice of his library and collections, the credit of exercising a degree of religious principle worthy of human nature ? The general character of that library may be inferred from his pursuits ; and its value from the catalogue prepared, with minute exactness, by his own hand, indicating its numerous varieties and treasures. It is worthy of remark that no volume or print was reserved, but such as were the sacred tokens of friendship ; and although a few of his friends bought, at the sale, what they conceived he chiefly wished to retain, he would derive from this considerate act, no other advantage than the liberty of re-purchasing, and when this was actually done, his conscientiousness led him to dispose of them to Mr. Rathbone, by whom they were presented to the Athenæum, where they still occupy a separate position. We cannot forbear quoting the Sonnet suggested by this event. Familiar as it may have become, it is and will ever be a beautiful evidence of the not undignified regret of the literary enthusiast relieved by the manly cheerfulness of the intellectual christian.

“ As one who destined from his friends to part  
Regrets his loss, yet hopes again erewhile  
To share their converse and enjoy their smile,  
And temper as he may affliction’s dart, —  
Thus, loved associates ! chiefs of elder art !  
Teachers of wisdom ! who could once beguile  
My tedious hours, and lighten every toil,  
I now resign you ; nor with fainting heart, —  
For pass a few short hours, or days or hours,  
And happier seasons may their dawn unfold,  
And all your sacred fellowship restore ;

When freed from earth, unlimited its powers,  
 Mind shall with mind direct communion hold,  
 And kindred spirits meet to part no more."

When, therefore, the dreaded bankruptcy did occur, the only consolation of which such a case admits, was happily ever present to alleviate the sufferings of his delicate mind, — a deep sense of conscientious integrity.

Perhaps the most general principle involved in the leading interests of the age, is the principle of integrity. It is this which lends an aspect of high moral dignity to the pursuits in which the multitude of our day are engaged. In England and this country, commercial enterprize being the predominant object of pursuit, uncompromising integrity is the virtue, for the exercise of which there is especial and often grand occasion. And while public opinion has been on the advance respecting the *legal* course proper to be pursued in relation to bankruptcy, the want of a high moral tone in regard to this subject is lamentably obvious. Were it not so, failures, which have bereft hundreds of half their just dues, and left the author of their suffering independent, would not be regarded, as they now are, with any degree of complacency; nor would an individual of this sadly numerous species, be allowed daily to parade himself or the tokens of his pecuniary superiority before the eyes of his abused and remediless creditor. In view of such considerations, enforced as they must be by the experience and reflection of every individual, it is morally refreshing to mark and appreciate the simple integrity of William Roscoe.

And now the cares of active life were well nigh ended; the partner of his days had gone before to her rest, and his feet were treading the declivity of life. He had put the finishing touch to an edition of Pope's works, and the Holkham catalogue was completed; what remained, then, for one who had so well sustained the burden and heat of the day, but that he should dedicate its close to recreative employment and repose? With his diminished resources, increased by the grateful contributions of friendship, he accordingly released himself from all bustling or laborious employments, and passed into retirement. Here he prepared for the press a final edition of Lorenzo, and a work of long standing upon Monandrian plants, — efforts which equal the most vigorous of an earlier period. And although with these his literary labors may be said to have

closed, his intellectual and moral activity was beautifully exerted until another world became the scene of its ceaseless exercise. The lovely flowers with which he had bestrown the pathway of his being, were bright and fragrant to the last. Literally may it be said of them, as has been significantly said in another connexion, — that they smiled up to him as children to the face of a father. The perception of physical beauty, the intelligent love of nature, the philanthropic spirit, the literary taste, which were the day-stars of his youth, continued their ministry in age; and the holier presence of domestic sympathies, of well-founded friendships, of blessed remembrances, was blending its cheerful influence with the deeper and more inspiring spirit of religion. How applicable to a life so happily passed, and so peacefully closed, are the well-remembered lines of our favorite poet!

“ That life was happy : every day he gave  
Thanks for the fair existence that was his ;  
For a sick fancy made him not her slave,  
To mock him with her phantom miseries.  
No chronic tortures rack’d his aged limb,  
For luxury and sloth had nourish’d none for him.

“ And I am glad that he has liv’d thus long ;  
And glad that he has gone to his reward ;  
Nor deem that kindly nature did him wrong,  
Softly to disengage the vital chord ;  
When his weak hand grew palsied, and his eye  
Dark with the mists of age, it was his time to die.”

We have spoken of the character of William Roscoe as a morally valuable example, and we have seen how little it is indebted to extraordinary occasions for its manifestation; it is as interesting to observe that it owes as little to any singular endowment or unnatural endeavor for its intrinsic worth. To the legitimate culture and exercise of the natural emotions and best impulses of the soul, we cannot but ascribe all that is good or beautiful in its aspect. That process of induration, so proverbially general, never bronzed the sensibilities of Roscoe; the dew of nature was not suffered wholly to evaporate in the heated atmosphere of worldly strife, nor to congeal in the frigid air of an artificial existence. That quality, so deep and morally auspicious, — susceptibility, — the sharpness of the mental appetites, the yearning of vigorous energies for free play and felicitous exercise, the fervid heat of the coals upon the

soul's altar, which a little musing sufficeth to kindle, — susceptibility, — this he ever possessed, or rather never lost, or the richly freighted influences of improvement would have passed by him as the idle wind.

We confess ourselves disposed to attribute no inconsiderable importance to this view of our subject. If improving agencies are dispensed as liberally through the intellectual and moral universe, as the elements of physical nature, and are designed to minister to something beyond themselves, to develop mind, they constitute the common birthright of humanity. Like the air and light, they freely and equally occupy space, ranging the wide expanse on the broad wings of universal love, and restrained in their holy mission by nought but human perversity. And is not the essential condition by which alone their rich benefits can be experienced, susceptibility? The piercing beams of the sun bear no images of beauty to the closed eye, and the evening breeze wafts no refreshment to the brow unbared to its breath. What wonder, then, if nature and Providence sometimes fail to awaken the spirit steeled by indifference, or shrouded in sin? In the life and character of Roscoe, we see nurtured, with a beautiful and holy care, —

“ ——— those first affections,  
 Those shadowy recollections,  
     Which, be they what they may,  
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,  
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing;  
     Uphold us, — cherish, — and have power to make  
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
 Of the eternal Silence; truths that wake  
     To perish never;  
 Which neither listlessness nor mad endeavor,  
     Nor man nor boy,  
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
     Can utterly abolish or destroy.” \*

The most remarkable peculiarity in the character of Roscoe, is its rare combination of active with quiet virtues, — of reflective with practical excellence, — of refined sentiment and thought, with perfect simplicity of manner and

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\*The noble ode of Wordsworth, from which these lines were taken, was recited by the late S. T. Coleridge, to Baron Von Humboldt, who learned with much surprise that it was the work of a living English poet, declaring he should have attributed it to the age of Elizabeth.

effort. Its distinguishing good, as an example, is the lesson of just self-development which it so pleasingly unfolds. Throughout that long life of more than eighty years, in its early struggles, amid its honorable fame, and during the various periods of literary, political, or professional activity, by which that character was tried and formed, we behold the native supremacy of the moral nature uninvaded. And it is impossible not to recognize in this the true secret of Roscoe's success,—the source of those intellectual and moral results which have hallowed his memory,—the means and the method by the aid of which, in comparatively ordinary circumstances and with comparatively common capacities, he identified himself with all the leading benevolent enterprises of the day, rendered valuable contributions to the literature of his native country, and drew, in broad relief, even from the calm tenor and narrow scene of his life, the deathless lineaments of an harmoniously beautiful character.

And, be it remembered, that this active and equable spirit,—this happy balance of the several faculties and sentiments,—was ever calmly and prevailingly operative. We feel that the stripling, who mourned over the dying agonies of the bird his own hand had destroyed on the banks of the Mersey, and the aged man who years afterwards stood beside a bed of lilies in his little garden, and compared their frailty with his own, is one and the same being. In opposition to a very popular prejudice, he succeeded in uniting literature and business and general philanthropy with domestic duty, without detriment to either. He was an amateur and a literary man; but benevolent sentiment was intimately associated with the enjoyments of both. While carrying on a correspondence which connected him with the master spirits of the age, he could yet be sedulously attentive to the interests of an unfriended artist; sympathizing in the magnanimous character of a cultivated Florentine nobleman, and deeming it unappreciated, he wrote his history. How constant, too, was his fidelity to nature, and how bountifully did she reward that allegiance! It was in her invigorating embrace that his young spirit waxed strong, and, freed from the baneful excitements of modern education, it knew no precocious development, no premature decay. The cares of business could not supersede an habitual communion with her influences, nor studious zeal allure him from obedience to her laws. He possessed a delightful inheritance in the



kingdom of letters, and ever and anon retired thither ; but the field of effort assigned him by the Creator, was the world ; he mingled in its strife, and shed abroad the blessedness of an improving activity. Yet beneath the agitated or listless tide of his common existence, swelled and deepened an under current of meditative being. He imbibed the nutritive elements of spiritual life, as they came forth with the solemnity and effulgence of the starry host, from the deep teachings of experience, — burst in gladness, as tributary streams, from the converse of intellectual humanity, or rose, like the sun-lit mists of the ocean, from the wide domain of nature, — sitting meekly, the while, at the feet of Jesus of Nazareth.

Such is, indeed, one of those beings whom no nation can appropriate ; universality characterized his philanthropy, and now that the “ natural canonization ” of death has hallowed his example, it is, and should be regarded as a common blessing. His countrymen have felt most nearly its holy influence, and among them will forever be the local memorials of his glory. Italy, though her classic ground was never pressed by his pilgrim feet, recognizes in his works the beautiful evidences of a deep and philosophical interest in her literature, admiration for her great men, and sympathy in her woes. And to us there is a new scene of meditative enjoyment in our father land. Before we reach the sacred precincts of Westminster, or stroll along the green banks of the Avon, we shall linger with respectful and moving interest beside the monument to the memory of William Roscoe, in the church-yard of Liverpool.

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ART. VI. — *Mrs. Butler's Journal.*

*Journal of Frances Anne Butler.* 2 vols. 12 mo. Philadelphia, 1835.

THIS is very much the sort of work that might have been looked for from a “ clever girl,” as the author repeatedly describes herself, educated in the green-room, under the eye of “ my father,” in immediate contact with the not very strait-laced morals, and still less rigid manners of the children of Thespis, — a little “ elated,” by repeated draughts from the intoxicating cup of public applause, in the old and new